We Claim:

1. A computer-implemented method for determining a suggested vehicle part stocking level for a vehicle retailer, comprising the steps of:

receiving from the vehicle retailer at least one of a target fill rate and a target inventory investment;

accessing part demand information for the vehicle retailer;

accessing part cost information; and

determining a suggested part stocking level for the vehicle retailer based on the part demand information and the part cost information in view of the target fill rate or the target inventory investment input by the vehicle retailer.

2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of accessing part demand information further comprises forecasting average weekly sales data for each part in part based on prior part sales data for the vehicle retailer.

3. The method of Claim 2 wherein the step of accessing the part demand information further comprises using a variable response smoothing technique to calculate average weekly sales data.

4. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of accessing the part deamnd information further comprises forecasting average weekly sales data in part based on prior part sales by other vehicle retailers, where the vehicle retailer is located in a geographic area proximate to the other vehicle retailers.

5. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of determining a suggested part stocking level further comprises computing an optimal inventory stocking level and an optimal re-order level for each part.

6. The method of Claim 1 further comprising the steps of defining inventory contraints and determining the suggested part stocking level in view of the inventory constraints.

7. The method of Claim 1 further comprising the step of translating the suggested part stocking level to a suggested part order for the vehicle retailer in view of current part inventory held by the vehicle retailer.

8. A computer-implemented method for determining a suggested vehicle part stocking level for a given vehicle retailer, comprising:

accessing regional part demand information for a plurality of vehicle retailers residing in a geographic area, where the plurality of vehicle retailers includes the given vehicle retailer;

determining a contrived part demand forecast for at least one part based on the regional part demand information;

accessing part demand information for the given vehicle retailer; and

determining a suggested vehicle part stocking level for the given vehicle retailer based in part on the contrived part demand forecast.

9. The method of Claim 8 wherein the regional part demand information is further defined as prior part sales data for each of the plurality of vehicle retailers.

10. The method of Claim 8 further comprises determining the contrived part demand forecast for a given part when the regional part demand for the given part exceeds a predetermined regional demand threshold value.

11. The method of Claim 10 wherein the regional demand threshold value varies based on the size of the given vehicle retailer.

12. The method of Claim 8 wherein the step of determining a suggested part stocking level further comprises using the contrived part demand forecast for a given part when the contrived part demand forecast for the given part exceeds the part demand information for the given part.

13. The method of Claim 8 wherein the step of determining a suggested part stocking level further comprises computing an optimal inventory stocking level and an optimal re-order level for each part.